

This year, the first wave of baby boomers, those Americans born between 1946 and 1964, turns 65. As older Americans continue to live longer, healthier, and richer lives than ever before, they are redefining the way we think about aging. Older Americans have driven some of the most profound changes in our nation's history and continue to be a guiding force in our lives.

Each May, we celebrate Older Americans Month to show appreciation and support for our seniors as they continue to enrich and strengthen our communities. This year's theme, "Older Americans: Connecting the Community," reminds us of the many ways in which older Americans bridge our communities and highlights how technology is helping older Americans become even more engaged. In particular, social media, as well as cell phones, tablet computers, and other technologies are playing an increasing role in the lives of older Americans.

Older Americans have a lifetime of experience and a strong desire to make a difference in their communities. Senior Corps, a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, gives them the opportunity to share their wisdom as mentors, coaches, or companions to people in need, or contribute their energy and know-how to community projects and organizations. Over 500,000 Americans currently serve through Senior Corps, benefitting individuals, non-profits, and faith-based and other community organizations nationwide.

As we honor older Americans and reflect on their contributions to our communities and nation, let us also remember our commitment to them. We can help give our seniors a more secure and healthier future by ensuring the preservation and continued improvement of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. That is why I will continue working hard to oppose any cuts to Social Security benefits, efforts to raise the retirement age, and privatization, as well as plans to convert Medicare and Medicaid to a voucher program and block grant, respectively.

This Older Americans Month, I encourage everyone to show their appreciation to the older men and women who have long been, and continue to be, there for us. It is truly a privilege for us to know them, and now our turn to be there for them. For more information about Older Americans Month and Senior Corps, visit the U.S. Administration on Aging at www.aoa.gov.